

From: Kurt Stoll
To: 'Microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 11/20/01 12:00pm
Subject: Microsoft deal

Sirs:

I am very disappointed in the settlement that Microsoft has apparently been able to establish with the US Justice Department. They have obviously used their monopoly power in PC Operating Systems to create monopolies in productivity software, development tools, and web browsing. And, their current .NET strategy is clearly an attempt to extend their monopoly throughout the web and into every computer.

While I always felt that breaking up Microsoft was too harsh, the monitoring provided for in the current settlement will do little to blunt their empire-building efforts. And there are no real penalties in the settlement for their past abuses. They have already established that they are willing to skirt and ignore any agreements that they come to with government agencies, continuing with their efforts undaunted.

The argument of some that harsh penalties and restraints will have a negative impact on the US economy are both specious and short-sighted. We do not forgive a woman who attempted to bomb a police car more than 20 years ago, simply because she has lead an exemplary life since. We should not forgive a company that has committed similarly grave offenses simply because they play an important role in our economy. In fact, it is because of the importance of their position in our economy that we must make certain that they toe the line; infractions on their part have a large impact in our lives.

Also, while it's true that imposing severe penalties on Microsoft may result in short term negative consequences for our economy, in the long run, our economy and consumers will all benefit from the increased competition. We do not need a juggernaut to establish standards - the web established useful and important standards that many people use on a daily basis (HTML, POP, TCP/IP, ...) without the guiding hand of a monopoly. In fact, many of these standards were established by non-profit organizations and consumer demand.

Finally, while I don't mean to draw a parallel between Microsoft and foreign enemies such as the Taliban or Saddam Hussein, it is clear that we are willing to sacrifice the short-term performance of our economy in a just cause. I believe that Microsoft has committed grave offenses; it is important that they receive proportional penalties for past behavior and real restraints on future behavior. Prosecution of Microsoft is a just cause for which I and many like me are willing to make a short term sacrifice.

Sincerely,

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